1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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Chapter I

DEATH AT GANKWE

WE HAD not thought to come upon death on our first night in the Suriname bush. What had killed Sedefo's brother no one could as yet say, for the time had not come to call upon the spirit of the dead man to speak. Death, said the Bush Negroes, was ravaging the family. Kunu, the law of retribution, the tool of ancestors and gods, had found this latest victim an easy prey to the black magic which had been invoked against him. In whispers they talked about a quarrel at work with a man who had a powerful snake god.

"The man's family kunu and the enemy's Aboma god," we heard as a refrain to the low muttering.

There would be dancing all that night for the spirit of the dead, the natives told us, and they asked if we did not wish to come and honor the dead. But an old man objected. "Let them wait until tomorrow," he said, "let them wait until they are rested. To face the spirit of the dead their own spirits must be strong."

That night whenever we stirred in our sleep we strained for the sound of the drums, but the wind blew from the east, and though Gankwe, where the dead man lay in state, was but a ten-minute run down the rapids, we could hear nothing. In the morning, however, we heard them plainly, heard the invocations drummed by the grave diggers on their way to the burial ground deep in the bush on the opposite bank.

Osio tintin
Osio be'e dyo.

[p. 2 contain no textual material]

1:Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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609 123 ago, so long that no one knew just when it happened, instructed that no one might impart to another, a stranger, more than half of what he knew. Moreover, no young person dared to speak at all of the supernatural, and such matters as inheritance were regulated by the laws of the gods and ancestors, who punished infractions with the scourge of kunu—a term we were to hear so much in this Suriname bush.

302 Tenye's head as we looked down upon it was a mound of wool, with little braids, each no more than an inch or an inch and a half long, fastened by a bit of black thread, each braid pointing upwards. This was called "tatafi," we knew, and to change the subject we talked about the styles of [855] hairdressing. A child's hair usually was closely cropped, and the heads of both Yamati and Sabape looked as smooth as blackened gourds. Tenye's hair had been cut but a little while ago, a moon perhaps, when the braids had grown so long that it had been too much bother even to make the hair look well in the fashion of what was called the coiled head, or the earth furrow style. Both of these types of hairdressing consisted of braids which diverged from the center in many rows, appearing at the outer edge at intervals of one inch, or slightly more. These ends were caught up and rebraided around the head, to form either the one coil of "lollo 'ede," or the several coils of "gon wi." There were also the single long braids—the "pitto"—and the "pina bonsu" way of hair combing, where the head when properly dressed makes a design of narrow strips of scalp showing between flat ribbons of braids, which look like so many snake vertebrae, radiating from the middle of the head outwards.

"When you come back from up river, I will dress your hair," said Tenye to both of us. "You," she said, pointing, "will become an obia man in your white country, and you will look so well that your husband won't ever remember to go to his other wives."

302 ● 754 But now Tenye's maternal aunt who had approached unobserved came to call the children away. She was not in

1: Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1928-1929) 1934
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good humor, and looked with disfavor on the friendly conversation between us. Her bad temper, we learned later, had earned for her the name of Mother Snake, given her by a witty town servant of a lumber factor. The idea of dressing our hair apparently appealed to the woman, however, for it would certainly only be a reckless white who would offer his hair for combing to a stranger, since with hair any number of supernatural things might be done. With the proper formula, a few hairs, and the required ingredients she might fashion an *opo*, let us say. Now an opo serves many purposes, but its essential quality is that it gives its owner power over the one whose essence is captured in the form of hair, or a scrap of garment, or finger nails, or whatever else had touched the person against whom one has designs. The power of the possessor of the opo is to dominate the will of the other, and its particular attribute might be to function in love, or in a court of justice, or in matters of getting employment, or of receiving gifts. But an opo would be the least dangerous consequence, for an opo is not to be conceived of as being in the category of bad magic. There is the danger of *wisi*—a word which has the double meaning of poison and black magic—and hair, or finger nails, or the menstrual cloth of a woman, or perspiration are the very best materials for working wisi.

And so the good woman, known when she was among us as Tita, and as Mother Snake otherwise, saw that we offered no cause for alarm and added her advice to Tenye's in pointing out powers which we might acquire and use to spectacular advantage in our white country.

"Yes, you must make pina bonsu," she said, adding her approval, "and then your husband will prefer you to his other wives. But if you want to keep him all to yourself, you must let us cut *kamemba*—cicatrized designs—on you. An ingi kodjo here on each cheek to begin with," turning to Tenye and smiling.

And so it was all planned. The Indian cudgel, a euphemism for the buttocks, and procreative symbols were to be

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rapids and large rapids. He carries loads and returns to his own village. But then something happens. His boat is good. He walks *koni*—carefully—but he loses his food, or his entire load, or his boat, or even his life. Something is working against him. It might be *wisi*—bad magic; it might be kunu. If you have kunu, then your enemies can make their bad magic work against you. So it is."

"But what is kunu, Bayo?"

He hesitated.

We assured him that there was no harm in our asking. We had been hearing so much about it, first about Zimbi, and how he had died from a cut with his machete. Now this machete had worked for him since he was a boy, and then he cut himself, and then, having cut himself, he became sick and died. People said down below this was kunu. What did it mean?

But he still hesitated and looked about him until at last when he spoke, he gave the answer we were coming to know so well—"*Massa Gadu sabi*—God knows"—that answer that was the signal that not alone Massa Gadu, but the one who invoked his name in protection against Bakra questions, knew the answer quite well but meant to keep his own counsel. For to talk of these matters is not good, we had been told before by Sedefo.

It was Bibifo who brought up kunu again when Bayo stepped out of the boat for an instant.

"Better not talk to Bayo about kunu, Bakra. There is a very big kunu in Bayo's family. He does not mean to lie to the Bakra when he doesn't talk, but it is better for him not to tell you about it. We Saramacca people say: 'A snake bit me. I see a worm, I am afraid.' Do not ask him more."

2

But the Bush Negro has many sayings, and it was a different proverb from that which Bibifo had quoted to us that guided us in our tortuous course in search of an understanding of kunu.

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KUNU

We sat one night talking about the neku vine, which is used to poison the streams for fishing, and the ceremonies attending the discovery of a new one, how the ownership of it is passed on in the female line, and about the songs which are sung to celebrate the finding, and the feast which is given at this time.

"Do you use this poison only to catch fish, or does it have other uses?" we asked guardedly.

"Well, sometimes people use it to commit suicide," one man said. "That is bad. Sometimes a man or a woman will do it to put a kunu on another's family." He went on to tell of a man who lately did this. He had been promised the daughter of a family in this very village when the girl was a small, small child. It happened that the girl's uncles found gold in one of the streams, for which the white man gave them much goods, and now they were big men. Since the girl's children would inherit much wealth, they wanted her to be the principal wife of a man of rank. There were messages back and forth, and council meetings, but the uncles insisted that the girl return the gifts she had received —insisted against the advice of many people. So this *bis*, this young lad, could get his revenge in no other way than by taking his own life, and sending a kunu to the family.

"The next time you come you will probably see the kunu at work. It is always so. Of what use is wealth when the children begin to die? One year the crops are bad, and you have to buy food. One year you go from one obia man to the next to find out why your sister cannot make children. Your money goes. Kunu is a bad thing."

Another day a woman came to us with a comb to sell. She had heard that we were gathering pieces to put into a large house where carvings from Africa were being shown, and she wanted us to have this comb of hers which was made as a betrothal gift by her husband who was now many years dead. It was an old comb with several broken tines and holes bored into it by insects, but the decorated end was still very beautiful, and we were eager to buy it. When we asked her to explain to us the meaning of the design, she

REBEL DESTINY

be. The Earth Mother, who is the giver of fertility, takes the adulterous woman who is with child under her protection, and no one may harm her. But the guilty man must make redress to the betrayed husband. Fines must be paid by the adulterer, and there is the beating which the husband administers. This beating has its ritual. The culprit, at the time that is set, comes out to the place where the injured husband and his family wait. They attack him with bare fists, although the Kromanti arm obias are sometimes slipped down on clenched hands, and with these serious wounds can be inflicted. With or without the iron arm bands, the beating is a serious matter, and the man who has committed the trespass is severely mishandled, unless he can get away from his assailants and run into the bush. In the bush he has sanctuary, and at the end of some time may come back to his village. The gods will not give a weakling husband, or one who is not clever enough to take his revenge when it is offered, a second chance.

At times this beating is a merry affair. This happens when the adulterer's family tries to protect him, and then the matter becomes a two-family brawl, or, if the village is a large one with more than one clan substantially represented in it, it may become a fight between two clans. Once, in a village near the railhead, a man was killed in such a fight, and then white police stepped in, and the murderer went to prison.

A chief, however, can give the culprit sanctuary, and Asikanu, being a chief's brother, was protected by the chief while negotiations were being carried on in his behalf. Now he was sent away from home to be out of the quarrel so that the enraged husband might be dealt with—time helps to cool anger. This was important in Asikanu's case, since the husband of the woman who had gone to Asikanu would consent to no fine, however large, and seemed, furthermore, to have misgivings about the manner in which the ritual beating would be conducted. "I will kill myself," he had been heard to declare. "I will kill myself, and give them all kunu. My *yoka*—ghost—will come to

M. Herskovits & Herskovits E-6 (1930-1932) 1934
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trouble them, and I will give the family a kunu, and the clan, too, because the chief has shielded him. I am powerless against the chief. I will kill myself."

A clan kunu is a thing to dread. It must be averted, whatever the hazards. And so, while they held council at Gaukwe with the husband and his family, Asikanu was away with the Bakra. . . .

At Apoesina an old woman sent word that she wished to see us. She was so old and so ill that we had to cross half the length of the village to come to her, so that she might see what a white man and a white woman were like.

"Well, how is it in the city?" she asked. "How is it among you whites?"

She had heard, she told us, that everything was quiet in the city, that it was as if people slept night and day. Crops did not grow as they should. People were sick. Was it so? And without waiting for us to answer, she spoke again.

"But it must be so. So many, many black people took their own lives, before the time of running away. There must be kunu there." She assured us that it had to be so. How else but that the children of those whites should pay for the old abuses? . . .

And in the Granman's village we heard of kunu again.

"Do you know what they say in the city?" Granman Yankuso said one late afternoon, addressing several of his favorite village chiefs. "They say we are good men here in the bush, because we believe in kunu. In the city, where they do not believe in kunu any more, they are not afraid to use magic to enrich themselves, or hurt their neighbors. In the city they say that, friends."

There were the usual responses from the chiefs.

"So it is."

"True, true."

"Yes, master of the realm."

We looked out at the shadows across the carved door of the council house, that superb rendering of the Earth Mother and her attendant symbols of procreation and abundance, beyond into the great clearing where we could

Herskovits & Herskovits E-5 (1935-1939) 1934
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Jamaica

see the shrines to the ancestors and gods. All about were the many houses of the Granman with the elaborately carved posts figuring his emblem. Under the shade trees the widow was pounding rice. She wore old clothes, and, since she would soon be out of mourning, they were almost in rags. The mourning band about her hair was also old.

The Granman's eyes must have followed ours, must have seen us study the outlines of the carving, and must have followed us to the shrines and the woman, for his voice changed, and now he repeated in a ruminating voice, "Yes, here we believe in kunu."

"Ya-hai!" was the noncommittal reply from his listeners.

The Granman looked now into the faces of his trusted chiefs. He looked steadily and long, searching in the semidarkness of the house for a betraying expression, as the chiefs sat on the low stools against the farther wall, their faces averted, as was seemly.

"Well, friends, kunu has made an end of my family. Is it not so? But the clan will go on. The clan's rule is not ended. Up and down the river tell them that, friends. Kunu has brought my family to an end. With me our family rule is finished. That is right. But the clan will go on."

The customary interpolations followed each phrase. Then singly the chiefs took their leave. Rising slowly, after they had received permission to depart, and with body bent, their hands touching their knees, each spoke his farewell.

In the light their ceremonially anointed bodies glistened like polished ebony. Swift and straight each made his way down the clearing and into a side path which led to the river, where the boats were fastened.

"Fine men, these," said the Granman to us after a silence. "And you, have you kunu in your country? . . . "

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But even after these and many more instances of kunu had come to us, and even though we had snatched a few sentences of explanation from one man and from another, the essential nature of kunu still eluded us. Was kunu, then,

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"Before she begs the gods, she is seated on a mat, or on cloths. Over her head a white cloth is thrown. The woman who is there to look after the coming of the child takes a calabash with water. Then she throws the water on the ground where the woman is seated. She begs the great gods, and the ancestors, and the woman's soul, and the woman's gods.

"When the pains come, she ties a cloth about her belly tight, tight, until it hurts. The woman who helps her gives her some water if she wants it, and she presses down on the belly and makes the cloth tighter and tighter, until the child comes. The cord is cut with a knife."

The knife was the same as the kind they used for cicatrizing, and the after-birth was buried behind the house, in a small hole into which food and a piece of the sacred sangrafu wood was thrown.

"The child is washed, and then *pemba*—kaolin—is put on its forehead, and after that the mother and the child bathe every day and then wash in pemba. Sometimes a moon comes and wanes, and another comes, and the mother still puts the white on herself and on her child."

But if the birth proved to be difficult, then the husband was told, and he besought his own ancestors and his own gods to help his woman and child.

"If the child doesn't come, then it's a bad spirit. Then they call the obia man."

When a woman had difficulty, everybody was troubled about it. If a woman had been unfaithful to her husband and had not confessed it, it would be that which would be killing the child in her womb, and killing her as well. Sometimes it was *wisi*—black magic—and everybody wondered who had sent it to their village. Sometimes it was a god who was envious.

"If it is a god, then, when the woman is strong again, she goes to a more powerful god and buys from him the next child to come into her womb. The strong god sees to it that the jealous one finds no way to harm the child."

What happened when a child was born dead?

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Chapter XVII

SARAMACCA OBIA

I

NO WORD of African origin which has survived in the New World has taken on such grim meaning as has the word *obia* in many of the islands of the Caribbean. No Negro there will speak of it, and its practices and properties are secret. When obia strikes in the islands, it is usually a matter for the government, and the forms its vengeance knows too often take a grisly turn.

In the life of the Bush Negro, however, obia is everywhere, and its name the commonest of bywords, for among the Suriname Negroes obia is not black magic, or witchcraft, or sorcery. Black magic [in the Suriname bush is *wiri*, and *wisi* is never confounded in the Bush Negro's mind with obia.

"Obia is good. Obia heals," they say in Suriname.

"Obia warns, obia protects."

"Obia protects a man against the force of a bullet, the thrust of an iron weapon, the dangers of fire."

"You want to know what obia is, Massa?" our cook asked one day. "We have this *komfo singi*—this priest's song:

"I am no master,
And I am no slave,
Yet when the masters come,
They carry water for me."

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

have a last look at the child's penis, as they will never see it again. Then the boy is proclaimed a man, and given clothes.

So far as could be observed, there is no circumcision of either the male or female, although such mutilations are indulged in by West African tribes in the region from which the Djukas came. The girls wear only the *coyo*, or a larger cloth known as *pangi*, until their first menstruation, when their mothers give them cloths. This is done in private. Menstruating women are required to leave their homes and retire to a separate hut situated outside the village on a by-path; they may not return until three days after the period is over. Under no condition are they allowed to go to the provision fields during this time.

At the age of about sixteen or seventeen the children are ready to be married. Sometimes they are betrothed in infancy, and occasionally a pregnant woman will betroth her child before it is born, conditionally, of course, upon its sex. Once the child is betrothed the ceremony must take place, otherwise the disappointed prospective mate will call down a *kanu*, or curse, on the entire perjured family, and they will all die. The pubescent child does not look forward to marriage as time for leaving its family, nor is marriage an initiation into sex relations. For these two reasons, getting married is not a serious step, and there is little illegitimacy because there is no reason for objecting to a marriage.

Youths must remain standing until their elders invite them to be seated. It is customary for older people to receive much respectful attention, for the older people are the sources of tradition and authority

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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Chapter Nine

MEDICINE AND MAGIC

NO one in Djuka land dies a natural death. Death is caused by witchcraft. At Santi Gron on the Saramacca River, preparations are being made for a burial. The whole village is excited. The women wailing are the relatives of the dead man. Children are crying because they see others crying. Unseen drums throb dully, making the hot air pulsate. The corpse lies in an open shed with only three walls—a death house (*dede oso*). Two girls of fifteen or sixteen are fanning it steadily to keep the flies away. The man died more than a week ago; all this time the body had been lying on a platform out in the tropical heat to decompose.

It is black magic that kills. Therefore the Bush Negroes make an effort to find out who made the magic that killed this man. An ancient ritual is employed. Three to ten days the corpse is left unburied, and in the humid heat the flesh undergoes a partial liquefaction. The putrescent fluid is gathered in a calabash cup and carried around from door to door.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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754 Each person in the village goes through the motion of drink-
695 ing some of it. Should anyone refuse to do this, he is the
737 person who is guilty of inflicting death by witchcraft upon the deceased.

The guilt is mainly ceremonial; but sometimes a penalty is attached to anyone's refusal to "drink." The liquid is not actually swallowed, but the calabash gourd is placed to the lips. The whole ritual is probably a folk-memory of the ancestral days when actual death was meted out to the man who worked black magic.

Another ceremony to find the guilty party may follow, especially if the first has not found him. The corpse on its platform is carried in procession through the paths of the village. Leading the procession are the obeiah men daubed with pemba dotee. Their faces are bisected vertically, one half covered with clay and the other half clean. Large crescents are drawn over each breast and over the belly. In the procession are the dead man's relatives. They are accompanied always by the booming drums. Four bucks carry the platform to the doorway of each hut, and pause there, or pause in the village clearing.

The obeiah men question the corpse: "Is this the house of the person who killed you?"

The four men bearing the body, which is supposedly possessed by the spirit of the dead, shake the platform, imparting a slight movement, a semblance of life, to the corpse. Meanwhile, buzzards and vultures, the uninvited guests, perch expectantly in the wall of jungle trees that surround

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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the village clearing. Flies and insects scurry. The body rolls over toward the door of the hut: yes, this is the guilty one. Or else it rolls away: no, he is innocent. The tomtoms boom again, and the procession moves on to the next hut.

After winding about the town, the procession continues along a game trail back into the forest, where the white man is not allowed to follow. There, back in the bush, the body is perhaps buried to cheat the buzzards and vultures; but we are not sure. The dead person's hut is never occupied again; neither is it repaired or demolished, but allowed, like the corpse, to decay.

Not for some time has the actual death penalty been inflicted upon those suspected of killing their neighbours by witchcraft. However, this used to be the case among the Djukas—more especially among the Aucaners—and the ceremony surrounding the detection of the guilty party is probably a survival of the Tshi-speaking people of Africa. Today the punishment of one suspected of causing death takes a more moderate form. In fact, unless the guilty party had previously announced his intention of causing the death, the punishment is "left to God." Otherwise, the guilty one may be given a severe beating, but, if the culprit escapes to a neighbouring village, it is incumbent upon the captain of that village to give him asylum. This has been noted by Mr. E. Wong, head bush police official at Moengo. Men are sometimes ostracized from the village, and are left to gain a livelihood by their own resources at some lonely spot on the river.

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

More than one person may be involved in the black magic that brings about death, and the burial ceremony may indicate several persons as guilty. This magic is similar to that employed by other primitive peoples. A spirit or soul resides in each living person; if this spirit is destroyed, the person will die. A man can cause the death of his enemy by summoning the spirit out of his enemy's body with herbs and charms and incantations; the spirit can then be shot with a gun. Or else he may procure some of his enemy's nail parings or hair, or any object of close personal association. He should also know his enemy's birthday and secret name. Rites are performed and, as a result, the enemy dies. His spirit has been slain. Magic, therefore, consists of the use of rituals for the purpose of compelling supernatural powers to do one's bidding.

For this reason many natives object to being photographed. The black camera, they believe, if pointed at them and clicked, will draw out their souls. The person owning the camera can then mutilate or destroy their souls at will. On our first expedition among the Bush Negroes all attempts at photography were difficult. When the attempt was made to take a native's picture the black would cry out, "*No pura me!*"—"Don't draw me out!" They firmly believed that the photographer was trying to draw out their spirits for magical purposes. On the second expedition, returning to the same villages with the developed photographs, we showed them to the natives and watched their reaction. The Negroes examined the snapshots curiously, turning them around, not

2:Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
SR8 Bush Negroes SR8

Not only are human beings animated by spirits, but the 774
Djukas believe that everything, every object in the external world, is the residence of a spirit. These spirits are called *Mama*. Thus, canoes have spirits (*Boto Mama*) and so have huts (*Oso Mama*), paddles, fetishes, stones, and especially drums. Each has an impalpable soul. Moreover, there are several jungle spirits, tribes of ghosts and invisible men.

The woods of Surinam are filled with ghosts. *Winti* is 776
a ghost that can come into your body and make you do things you otherwise would not do. A pregnant woman, several weeks before her delivery, was struck dumb by an unknown enemy. This aphasia disappeared upon the birth of the child. When she was expecting another child, she fasted six days, to the point of exhaustion. Then a magic rite was undergone, and she broke the fast. Knowing that someone has put *Winti* on her to prevent her from having children, she now fools them by simulating illness. From this it is apparent that Winti is under a measure of control; it can be sent into the 776
body of an enemy to do him harm, then it is called *winti*.

Jumbees are also bad spirits that can be controlled by the device of magic. Once put on a person, they bring him bad luck. Pain is caused by a spirit called *Congo Bantri*. The soul is known as *Banaki*, or *Kra*. In the bush there also dwell tribes of evil men who are invisible; every time a Bush Negro looks at them they turn themselves into a tree or an anthill. When the Bush Negro is not looking, they kill him with unseen arrows.

The Djukas believe in the *Gran Gado*, the ruling spirit

2: Kahn D-5 (1922-1930) 1931
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of a burning fire without being harmed. Bathing every day for nine days in water in which rusty scrap iron and peanut husks have been boiled renders a man impervious to the cut of a knife and his flesh capable of turning any blade. Stomach-ache is treated by drinking an infusion from the hollow handle of a dance rattle. Especially potent in all magic preparations are the bristles of *tamanua*, the anteater. *Obeiah watra*, another infusion, is drunk by men before going into the bush, to give them luck and strength. It is also possible to acquire strength or other virtues by rubbing one's body with the putrescent fluid gathered from the corpse of a dead man who possessed those qualities.

If a person should find fecal material in front of his hut or rotten eggs along the trail in such position as to make it likely for him to step upon it, it is certain that this material was placed there by a member of the community who is attempting to *wisi* or bewitch him. Anyone who removes this matter is liable to insanity.

Minor cuts and wounds may be treated with the bark of the *apracoeyo* tree. This is ground up and mixed with the brew prepared from the leaves known as *prkein fol cacu* (little rooster).

/67 cont./

613 SS4 692 [942 P42] 2) He exerts an extended judiciary power, for it is taken for granted that the legal and political power of the tribe cannot intervene in affairs between members of the same lineage, even murder, for it can be said that in the custom of the Refugee Blacks the lineage represents only one single life.

It is obligatory that the following be settled within the framework of the lineage:

[954 923 578] --Accusations of murder by sorcery where victim and supposed murderer are both members of the lineage;

--Arguments over lands within the zones effectively possessed by the lineage.

613 SS4 692 877 The way in which the captain exercises his functions as judge is hard to know, because for the Refugee Blacks it is extremely shameful to reveal the dissensions within one's own lineage. And as for those of other lineages, if one succeeds in becoming acquainted with them, one scarcely dares talk about it for if that came to be known you could smart for it.

613 422 554 Lineage heads have a certain authority on the material level; they designate the men charged with doing the work ordered by the administration, but truth to tell, it is above all a question of choosing from among volunteers, for it is profitable work. They might not succeed in imposing clearly unpopular orders.

613 SS4 624 The captain designates a certain number of supervisors or basia to help him. Their /68/ role consists in watching over the cleanliness of the village, in making all the material arrangements relative to dances and burials, in calling together those concerned to the meetings of the council.

613 591 The lo constitutes a unit from the spiritual point of view, but it is important to notice that it does not involve any collective organization on the material level. In this domain the wildest individualism reigns; there are no tools for collective use, and people get together to make their clearings only if they want to.

/73 cont./

643 644 586 The present grand man, contrary to his predecessors, has only one wife. She is dressed like the other women and works at her clearing like everyone else. /74/ but her marriage to the grand man imposes special obligations on her: she can not divorce him; neither can he repudiate her.

643 829 The attitude of the Boni toward the grand man is a curious mixture of respect and disparagement. They regard him as the living symbol of their nation, and each one resents as if it were a personal insult an outsider having an incorrect attitude toward him. But their undisciplined spirit kicks up at the measures he is obliged to take to make them respect customary law, and even the authority of a poised and benevolent man like Grand Man Difu is not willingly accepted. As a matter of fact, the Boni stand for [854] [985] the authority of the grand man as they adhere to the worship of their gods, by the feeling of an absolute and inexorable necessity; in their minds the grand man is above all the priest of Odun; if the grand man were not there, they would be without defense against the wisiman, without recourse against the vengeance exercised by the yaka of the dead of other lineages.

The political power of the grand man is entirely based on these beliefs, and if they were to collapse, he would disappear [822] with them. Nobody would submit to any other law than that of the lineage, founded upon fear of the ancestors.

692 693 The Hnti kuutu. This is the assembly of the men, without distinction of age (1) or kinship; this council (Hnti = law) constitutes

> 1. There is no precise rule for fixing the age from which an adolescent may sit in this council. [581] It is apparently when he has reached full physical development and earns his living by his own efforts, about 18 to 20 years. He does not have to be married.

the legal apparatus of the Boni.

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591 991 692 In fact, the society of the Refugee Blacks has not elaborated true political institutions; it is essentially a grouping for collective defense against suprahuman perils. The council, like the grand man, has power and authority only insofar as it remains closely bound to this function.

511 [565] Absence of subordination. Among the Refugee Blacks no privileged class exists. /76/ and they all face life on a footing of rigorous equality; all receive the same education, must cultivate the soil, [554] build their boats and houses, and live by paid work. The differences in standard of living observed from one to another stem basically from intelligence and work; and that, in spite of the belief in the possibility of getting rich by sorcery, is clearly understood by all.

565 [465] Although the Boni willingly engage in paid work for one another in transportation by boat, there exists no tendency toward the formation of a class of rich people and one of wage-earners.

571 461 [357] 462 No servants exist among them, and one observes in their mutual relations no exploitation of the weak. Neither does one observe that a rich man tries to have done by another, for pay, the customary jobs he must carry out for the benefit of his wife (clearings, building of boats). This would be looked on with great disfavor. The grand [643] man himself, if his grandson is not there to help him, goes himself to draw water from the river and he does it ostensibly, even though he has a constant concern for his prestige.

829 The misfortunes undergone by their ancestors are certainly at the base of this conception; for they have inspired in the Refugee Blacks a particular sense of human dignity which is not found to the same degree in Africa.

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Rent

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764 767 [613] In principle the forward bearer (who is called bouman by analogy with a boat) must belong to the dead person's lineage. Apart from this restriction, the bearers can be (and are in fact) any people whatever, the only condition required being that they be extremely vigorous, because the load they carry is at the limit of their strength.

Fraud can exist in isolated cases, but in the great majority of cases there is no doubt as to the good faith of the bearers; they give contradictory answers, go ahead and back interminably, until, exhausted, they are raised up again by others. Actually, the interpretation of these automatic movements does not differ essentially from any process of divination.

The dead person is interrogated from the age of four or [766] five years up. If it is a very young child, he is not interrogated; but the causes of his death are sought by interrogating possessed people, and if there is reason to, the kumu is appeased in the same fashion.

764 789 754 At the beginning of the interrogation the tribunal tries to make sure that the dead person was not a wisimã. After sending the bearers to the other end of the village, the president of the assemblage has two young men hidden in huts; then he has the bearers called, saying to the dead person: "I have lost So-and-so and So-and-so, find them." If the dead person was an upright man, he must have acquired a suprahuman clairvoyance permitting him to direct his bearers straight away toward the huts in question. If he was a wisimã, he will be as if blind; his bearers go wandering in vain from hut to hut.

They state that this test always succeeds.

764 789 761 [996] [784] The interrogation proceeds interminably. The causes of death are taken up. The first question is: is it a god who killed you? The answer is nearly always yes, and they proceed by elimination in order to arrive, for example, at learning that it is an Ampuku, that it is the Ampuku bound by So-and-so. By what the kumu was set in motion, how to appease it, is not the

764 /174 cont./

Cemeteries. There are two cemeteries in Boni country: one on the lands of the Dikan lineage for the people living on the French bank, the other downstream from Kotika for the inhabitants of that village. They are ordinary places which nothing indicates from the bank, for they are covered like the rest of the country by secondary forest. The dead are buried there in graves aligned parallel to the river, about seven meters apart. The dead are placed with heads turned toward the river. No separation by lineage exists within the cemetery.

The graves are not marked by any decoration, and at the end of about ten years, the mound having settled down, no trace of the burial remains.

[K9] The graves are never cleaned. Only the tɔ̀ɔmɛ̀ heads, who have received special instruction, know the graves of the principal chiefs and the boundaries of the cemetery.

769 [754] [715] The Boni never go to the cemetery alone and do not make offerings on the graves of their near relatives. Someone who would frequent the cemetery alone would be suspected of being a winimɛ̀ seeking to capture the yɔ́ka of a dead person.

764 489 Even if they are right near the villages, cemeteries are never connected directly to them by paths, and the dead are transported by boat. By proceeding thus they hope to isolate the villages from evil influences.

966 If someone dies by drowning, he is buried away from the cemetery. According to Mr. W. F. van Lier, among the Djuka [761] [784] [184] all drowned persons are supposed to have been victims of a kumu; the Boni do not have this conception and declare that they have lost the meaning of this custom; one notices, however, that they observe mourning for the drowned according to the usual rites.

6:Herskovits--295 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SR8 Bush Negroes SR8 Boni

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772 The Refugee Blacks consider beings and things as distributed on several levels:

--The creator god;
--Lower gods;
--Ancestors;
--Men;
--Animals;
--Plants and inanimate things.

To each of these levels corresponds a level of life and a level of force (kaakiti). A higher force may act on a lower force, but not the reverse.

771 One may say that the cults of the Refugee Blacks have as their goal to capture the vital force of the gods and the ancestors and to bring it back to the level of men, giving them strength, luck, and fecundity. To thus increase one's vital force can be defined as good. Evil (negative magic, witchcraft) is, on the contrary, to capture the vital force of another man in order to increase one's own.

• 754 The idea that one has witches is that he uses a higher force (especially an ancestor's yaka) which he has succeeded in capturing by magic and in subjecting to his will in order to dominate someone else. Reduced to his own strength alone he could do nothing.

789 824 (792) The magic of the Refugee Blacks might allow one to believe that they think they act directly on men through the medium of plants to which magic virtues are attached. This would be a grave error; in their minds, animals and plants are placed at a lower level absolutely incapable of acting on man by itself. Plants are thought to act only insofar as they appear capable of attracting, of holding like storage cells, the vital force emanated from the gods.

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794 [181] The laws of Odun. The cult of Odun (Odū) is the keystone of the social and religious structure of the Refugee Blacks. It is a very secret cult; its rites are not practiced in the presence of outsiders and all curiosity about it meets with frank hostility. [123] The Boni, who talk rather freely about the cults of possession, are mute on the subject of Odun, and one may spend years among them without even hearing this name uttered.

794 184 The worship of Odun is common to the Boni and the Saramaka (perhaps this is what explains the trustful relations which exist between the two groupings). Among the Djuka it is replaced by the worship of Gwangwēla (Grantata), which has exactly the same functions and rites.

796 Odun is not to be confused with the creator God Nana (Masa Gadu). The myths explaining the relationship of these two entities were not known by our informants, but it is clear that Odun was sent to men by Masa Gadu as legislator and judge.

671 Odun's laws have a profound originality, as much by their content as by the sanctions which accompany them. It is not excessive to speak of a religious and moral doctrine of the Refugee Blacks.

[141] These laws appear in negative form. A certain number of acts and behavior are forbidden to those who have entered the society of the Refugee Blacks by taking an oath which binds them for good and all. 784 Offenders will be punished without the direct intervention of men, by the all-powerful action of Odun, who will kill them or /196/ strike them down with sicknesses. As a general rule, Odun's punishment is death; this is what explains the fear his name inspires.

673 [154] Odun forbids:

--Sorcery, wisi, in the most general sense, that is, any magic action having as its purpose the killing, making ill, and in a general way doing harm to another person.

/19b cont./

[673] [754] [227] --Vengeance: if someone believes himself to be the victim of witchcraft, he must under no circumstances engage in counter-witchcraft or invoke his ancestors against his enemy. He may ask only for the protection of the Obia. It is Odun who [784] will avenge him by sooner or later killing the evil-doer.

[283] --Violence in any form whatever. It is regarded as a particularly serious offense against the laws of Odun to strike with an armed hand and to make human blood flow (1).

[634] 1. That explains the strictness with which the society of the Refugee Blacks limits the right of punishment granted to the wronged husband, who must strike only with bare fists in front of witnesses, never in the bush nor on the river. Fear of seeing [824] [952] human blood flow explains the reticence of the Boni toward minor surgical operations.

[641] [58] --Any attack on personal liberty by material or moral coercion; in particular, neither a man nor woman may be constrained to remain in a marriage which has ceased to please him; nobody may be forced to reside here or there.

[273] The forms of magic so popular among West Indians, aimed at capturing a person's love, are for this reason rejected by the Refugee Blacks and considered as a form of vio.

[769] --Any evocation of the spirits of the dead, even to ask [954] them for protection, other than in the public ceremonies provided for by custom. Thus nobody must go to the cemetery to pray even on his parents' grave. Whoever would do that would immediately be considered as sick.

/196 cont./

784 Odun's punishment is not regarded as immediate. It may be delayed for a certain number of years for reasons known to him alone, but it will necessarily take place.

683 783 Violence can be pardoned if the guilty one repents and makes an offering. The reparative offering (for example, if someone has threatened his adversary with a machete or has struck him to the point of making blood flow) is a demijohn of tafia or a certain quantity of tobacco leaves displayed in Odun's chapel.

• 754 784 But there is no pardon for the wiimã. Even if men pardon, Odun remains pitiless. Thus nobody can admit being guilty of wiin, for there is no possible reparation; besides, no one would dare beg for Odun's mercy on behalf of a wiimã, for this would be to associate oneself with him and expose oneself to being struck by the god in the same way.

[683] [746] The wiimã will be killed by Odun, and men will have to share in the punishing by refusing the body burial in the cemetery and by going to throw it in the bush. If they /197/ refused to obey this law, Odun would consider that they denied his doctrine and would strike them down either in person or by killing any member of the guilty lineage.

Thus, when in 1952 an old woman named A... of the Lapé lineage, who had settled in the Creole village Hermina, died, it appeared that she had wiin, but since she had been living among the Creoles, her near relatives did not dare intervene, and she was buried in the Hermina cemetery. Several [613] years passed without incident, then misfortunes cropped up; deaths which took place in the lineage, especially that of P... (1955) and T... (1957), and an accident that happened to a child in 1958, were recognized as punishments carried out by Odun upon the Lapé lineage.

346 The place of worship of Odun is a tiny chapel near the grand man's house. It contains only a post crudely carved in the shape of a bust, without any decoration.

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The rites of the worship of Odun are known only by the grand man and by an old man who replaces him when he travels. They are practiced only on the occasion of the collective oath against witi, renewed every two or three years, and when it is necessary to implore Odun's mercy toward an offender. The officiant bathes the latter's body with a maceration of leaves that he alone knows.

To question Odun and know whether he pardons, they make use of a sacred object named afalaku, placed on a board put on the heads of two men. The answers yes and no are deduced by interpretation of the movements of the bearers, as in the interrogation of the dead.

The oath before Odun is also practiced as a legal test, permitting a man unjustly accused of theft or any misdeed whatever to justify himself.

Thus, in November, 1959, B... of Anii, accused by two Djuka of being responsible for the burning of a large cabin /carbet/ in which objects of value were stored, asked to justify himself before Odun.

Odun's laws, which have the effect of forbidding violence, vengeance, and every form of oppression, give to the society of the Refugee Blacks a unique atmosphere of dignity and serenity which is not found to the same degree in animistic African societies. Most African societies censure sorcery and murder, but they accept vengeance and various forms of oppression. It is probable that the men who, two or three centuries ago, deep in the forests of Surinam, developed these laws, were inspired more or less consciously by Christian ideas, but they introduced them into an African system of thought, associating them with the idea of material sanctions in the present life, without which they would have been powerless.

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Odun's laws create an irreducible cleavage between the Refugee Blacks and the Creoles. The Creoles of Surinam, like the West Indian gold miners of the Maroni, profess Christianity, but they have a special conception of it, associating with Christian ideas /19?/ beliefs of various origins and often magic practices. If in quasi-totality they reject magic aimed at doing harm without reason, they take very generally for granted:

--Counter sorcery inspired by vengeance;

--"Invocations" to the spirits of the dead and divers magic formulas in which it is believed one captures the vital force of these spirits in order to make practical use of it;

--Charms having the purpose of forcing the love of a person one desires.

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The Creoles are as attached to these conceptions as the Refugee Blacks to the laws of Odun, which are absolutely contrary to them. They have such importance in the thought of both that it would be unthinkable to make a group of Creoles and a group of Refugee Blacks live together for any appreciable length of time integrated into the same organization. Attempts made to do this, especially in Surinam, have always failed. When an economic activity engages them in the same work in the same locality, Creoles and Refugee Blacks form two separate groupings, each living according to its own law.

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If Refugee Blacks leave their group for any great length of time to settle in the midst of Creoles, if they do not come back periodically to renew the oath of Odun, it is taken for granted that they have abjured his laws and that they are suspect of wisi. It happens that people who have spent a whole portion of their lives in the midst of the Creoles come back to live in their native village because they are prey to adversity or sickness; they are always welcomed (the lineage cannot expel one of its members), but chances are great that they will be declared wisimã upon their death. This was especially the case with an

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169 794 old woman of 90, A...., who died in Asisi in January, 1957. Having lived with Creoles in her youth, she had come back to live in her native village for at least 30 years and had never given occasion for any unfavorable remark. Nevertheless, upon her death it appeared that she had wisi.

791 829 199 Attitude toward Christianity. The Refugee Blacks, who are acquainted better than one might believe with the conceptions of the populations in the midst of whom they live, have a clear feeling of the relationship which exists between their metaphysical and moral conceptions and those of Christianity. They think they worship the same god as the Christians, in a completely different way but just as sound. They have no animosity whatever toward the Catholic and Protestant clergy, and most of them agree willingly to wearing crosses or medals. But they have not the least intention of abandoning their beliefs for that. They do not perceive the contradiction and do not understand that people might want to oblige them to choose.

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851 171 165 799 [688] [893] [784] Like the Creole gold miners, they attach great importance to baptism, considered as an obia protective against the dangers of the bush. On Christmas, 1957 they were strongly impressed by the accidental death of a Djuka Christian living at the Kotika school. He refused to observe mourning for his wife according to the custom of the Refugee Blacks, and used to go to drink in the cabarets of the Creole villages. On Christmas evening, when drunk, he drowned himself. That was attributed to a suprahuman punishment. We heard /199/ the following reflection on this subject: "He was baptized and he drowned himself just the same. That is therefore not worth the trouble."

61 581 691 Actually, the matrilineal structure of the Refugee Blacks and their conception of marriage form an irreducible cleavage, which appears immediately as soon as one leaves the metaphysical conceptions to pass to the plane of practical living.

[774] [775] /216 cont./ the akka is an immortal divine element attached to a human person for the duration of his life and which, at his death, returns to the domain of the divine, no longer keeping any contact with men.

[828] The akka is the source of life from which the human personality is nourished, but it is not this personality.

The Refugee Blacks consider the akka as a personal protector god; they are apt to say mi gadu, my god, for mi akka.

The concept of the akka was spontaneously transposed by the West Indians into that of the guardian angel. They speak in Haiti of the "big good angel."

For Refugee Blacks the life, health, and destiny of a man depend above all on the akka; they think that if the akka went away, the body and mind of the man could not remain bound together; he would die or lose consciousness. This is, a little, what happens each night, for they believe that the akka leaves the body to wander, which brings on the loss of consciousness.

[754] /217/ So the wisimã, the sorcerer, tries to profit by this to capture the akka so that the man may become insane.

The akka is thought to have tastes, desires, and goals foreign to those of the personality and of which the man, in his ordinary consciousness, has no knowledge. The akka can make the man sick if he behaves in a way that it does not like. So when someone is sick, he resorts to divination in order to know whether it is not the deed of the akka and, in the affirmative, for what motive. One might think that the akka behaves like a conscience in the moral sense of the term; that it gets angry if its bearer does something evil. But in reality the akka shows itself to be as arbitrary, wicked, and venal as the lower gods of the Refugee Blacks. If it gets angry (they say: mi akka mãndi), this is because its bearer wears clothes of a color it does not like, or because it wants an offering. We have never, on the other hand, heard a case spoken of in which the akka might have become angry with its bearer because he was a thief, liar, or adulterer.

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2. Although it happens that people receive as a name an akka name, sometimes accompanied by a qualificative, such as Lébikwaku.

774 262 [551] Actually, each one knows his akka's name, which was revealed to him by his parents when he was a child; to this name is attached an akka kina or food prohibition relative to the akka. [754] Both are carefully kept secret even from near relatives and friends, for knowing them could help the wisimii take possession of the akka. On this subject people often use the term gadu kina, as they say mi gadu instead of mi akka. [784] [787] This term is easily confused with the prohibition imposed on the possessed person by the god which incarnates itself in him; these are two very different notions.

[858] [789] The akka kina is unique for each man. It is sought by the parents when the child is completely weaned. They try to draw parallels between the foods he has eaten and the health disorders he may exhibit, and these suppositions are confirmed by divinatory procedures.

774 782 A man does not ordinarily pray to his akka. He addresses prayer to it only if he is sick, to ask it for protection, or before leaving on a long trip, to ask it to watch over him. If he comes back safe and sound, he thanks it by making an offering to it, in the form of a bottle of syrup (switi sopi), which he turns upside down over his head.

774 184 According to Mr. W. F. van Lier, the Djuka have the idea that the shadow (kaaka) is the visible image of the akka; the Boni do not appear to have this conception; one does not observe that they attach any importance whatever to whether a man's shadow passes over them; on the contrary, one must not step over a man lying on the ground, that might injure his akka.

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994 995 The yɔrka. (The Boni say yɔrka, the Djuka and the Creoles of Surinam yɔrka.) The expression yɔrka is used only to designate the spirits of the dead. But of course the elements of the yɔrka are present in the living man. .../

994 828 /219/ The yɔrka is the ordinary consciousness of the man, his memories, tastes, aversions, all that constitutes his personality. All that, for the Refugee Blacks, does not come from the divine plane but at least in part from former human existences, and after death will not reach the divine plane. The Refugee 995 Blacks seem to believe that after death, the yɔrka remains unchanged, will keep the same desires, the same aversions, the same thoughts; it is simply no longer in ordinary life, it has passed to another plane, intermediate between the divine and the human, from whence it continues to remain in a certain fashion in contact with men. The various informants we questioned on this subject declare that they have no idea of the fate of the yɔrka after death, of its place with respect to the divinities, of the rewards or punishments of which it may be the object according to the manner in which the man lived. These are questions they never ask themselves openly and which hardly interest them, all their interest being centered on earthly life. The idea of a paradise is absolutely foreign to them; [954] they acknowledge however in the case of the wisimã that they will be stripped of the force that every living being receives from the divine, and that thus destroyed as beings, they will no longer be more than empty shadows.

969 The gaã yɔrka, spirits of the ancestors, are believed to watch over their descendants and are subject to worship.

[971] Ancestor worship. Among the Refugee Blacks, ancestor worship is intimately bound up with all the acts of family and social life. They assume that the yɔrka of the ancestors are always present near their descendants and that they protect them. It is through them as intermediaries that the force emanated by the divine is received by the living.

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which people do not hesitate to come to ask for remedies or opinions, in spite of the evil they have done to the lineage and perhaps will do tomorrow. It is even allowable to wonder whether people do not prefer to consult the most wicked divinities, for they are believed to be stronger.

The kunu focuses, turns aside upward high purposes the blind forces of superstition, fear, and rancor. Several authors who have written on the Refugee Blacks have stated that calamities were almost unfailingly attributed to sorcery (wisi). This is a grave error due to the fact that they believed they could transpose to the Refugee Blacks what is observed among the Creole populations of Surinam. If this were true, no positive social bond could exist. We believe we can assert that among the Refugee Blacks divination lays the blame on sorcery in only scarcely a tenth of the misfortunes. Here, among other examples, are several typical cases concerning Boni who worked with us or whom we have known especially well:

--In 1948, Fintiman (Dju) falls ill (violent pains in the legs): kunu of a Kintamanu.

--In 1948, Galmo (Papalisoo) is accidentally hurt (gun backfire): kunu.

--In 1949, Dioli, captain of the Dju lo, is smitten with hemiplegia and remains paralyzed. He dies in 1951: kunu of a Papa gadu.

--In 1950, a Saramaka is killed in a hunting accident (a gun in poor condition went off by itself): [illegible] (accident).

--In 1951, Kanayen (Kotika) drowns while sailing at night on the river: wisi.

--In 1951, Loka (Dju) dies at the age of 70: kunu of an Ampuku.

--In 1951, F... (Dju) is seriously hurt by the falling of a branch while cutting his clearing: kunu of a yɔrka.

/231 cont./

--In 1952. Dolo (Awara Bakka) dies almost all of a sudden with the symptoms of peritonitis: kunu, punishment for incest committed by another member of the lineage.

--In 1952. Madodo, ten years old, son of Chaya (Awara Bakka) accidentally drowns: natural accident (Sagoinu).

--In 1954. Bénati (Dju) dies at nearly 75 years of age: kunu of a Papa gadu.

--In 1954. Agyémési (Aut.) dies almost all of a sudden: killed by Odun (he was a wisimi).

--In 1965. Tabiki (Awara Bakka) dies at over 80: natural illness.

--In 195 . Kosolda /Aic/ (Afi lineage) dies suddenly, aged about 50: kunu of a yaka.

--In 1957. F... (Lapé) is gravely ill with symptoms of typhoid: kunu of a Papa gadu.

--In 1957. Sokodo (Dip. II) dies at 40: kunu of a Kintamasu.

/232/ One observes that in the 15 cases cited here, the kunu interferes ten times, while in three cases natural causes: illness, accident, were assumed.

In reality, the Refugee Blacks do not have the conception of a natural world, subject to known or knowable laws, which is set against a supernatural world. The intervention of a Papa gadu is neither more nor less natural than an illness or an accident. There is only, on the plane of human life, more or less frequent intervention by suprahuman forces. The intervention of these forces is made according to laws which embrace the totality of beings and things, laws which men cannot understand but of which they believe they have a partial and empirical knowledge.

791 /237 cont./

Not just anyone may resort to divination on behalf of someone else: only the eldest have the right to do it, and it has happened that the grand man punished offenders severely.

799 Fate. The Refugee Blacks do not attribute all misfortunes to suprahuman causes. They have the notion of natural accident. [752] [illegible]. They say [illegible] mitti mi, or again ogi mitti mi. [761] misfortune met me. They also accept the idea of natural death. They usually regard as natural death that of the very old, the infirm from birth, and sickly children.

[789] Divination blames fate in ten to 20 per cent of accidents. [792] It is the usual explanation for hunting accidents.

792 /238/ Magic Forces:

As we have shown, the Refugee Blacks consider beings and things as a world of forces capable of acting on one another, outside of time and space, according to laws which men cannot understand but of which they believe they have a partial and empirical knowledge transmitted by tradition since the 754 time of the ancestors. They distinguish negative magic forces, 789 wisi, which have the effect of diminishing the vital force of men, which makes them sick or kills them, and positive magic forces, obia, which come from the gods: the obia comes to increase the vital force of men, giving them protection, immunity, or knowledge. But no power is in essence a principle of good or evil; nothing is impossible for him who knows the formulas; this is why the magic of the Refugee Blacks is reduced to a perpetual and indecisive struggle between obia and wisi.

754 Wisi. Wisi is sorcery in the African sense of the term, that is, [673] the use of magic procedures to harm others; wisi is for the Refugee Blacks the pre-eminently criminal act, at the same time against morals and against society. The struggle against

754 781 /238 cont./ The struggle against

will is one of the foundations of their social life. protection against the undertakings of the wisimɛ̃ one of the most constant worries of each person. Nobody knows these wisimɛ̃ with certainty; one is reduced to vague suspicions of this or that person, which one dares not formulate for lack of proof. No one knows exactly how they operate. Yet each one feels their enterprises everywhere about him, and those who by reason of their wealth or successes with women have the most reason to believe themselves exposed to jealousy live in anxiety.

754 [828] [784] Intense jealousy or hate are already a form of wisi, and this is why each one must try to drive them out of his heart; besides, he would risk falling ill or being subject to all sorts of calamities for having broken his oath. But the wisimɛ̃ employs explicit procedures:

--Burying a bottle (beli bata) containing sorcery under his enemy's door. When the latter comes home, the sorcery will [751] penetrate into him. So some Refugee Blacks carry a special obia against this kind of aggression: thanks to this obia, they will feel a sharp pain in the tip of the foot when approaching the bottle, which they will thus uncover easily.

754 774 --Kisi akkaa, stealing the akka of the enemy. The latter then becomes mad. The Boni believe that the wisimɛ̃ operates at night, taking advantage of the fact that the enemy's akka has left his body to wander. He captures it by attracting it with what it likes. For that, one must know the name of his enemy's akka, know its tastes and preferences; all things which each Refugee Black will carefully hide, even from his comrades. What the wisimɛ̃ does with the akka was not clear to any of our informants. He tries either to capture it in order to deprive his enemy of it, or to make it hostile to its bearer, or to inspire it with abnormal ideas or tastes. If someone manifests an abnormal change /239/ in tastes or behavior, people will be inclined to think that a wisimɛ̃ was able to act upon his akka.

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754 [304] [329]

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On this point it is taken for granted that Indian magic is much more powerful than African magic, and that any Indian is capable of attracting his enemy's asiba.

--Transforming himself into a vampire (azemã) and flying at night in search of sleeping men in order to suck their blood and eat them in spirit; this conception, closely related to the one which the West Indians have of the soucouyan, comes from Dahomey (in Fon, aze = sorcery). It is said, as in Dahomey, that the azemã flies by emitting fire through the anus.

--Seni wi sani: this is what the Creoles call "sending bad baggage." This is acting upon a living being or an inanimate object to make it behave in abnormal fashion at the expense of the enemy. For example, if someone is bitten by a snake or if a child is carried off by a tiger, the action of a wisimã will be blamed first, for normally snake and tiger do not attack. But there is no material limit to the action of the wisimã, who can make a branch fall on his enemy's head or make a cartridge of dynamite burst prematurely.

[329] The idea that the sorcerer may transform himself into a jaguar, dog, or other animal is not assumed by the Refugee Blacks. Neither do they have the idea of brotherhood of sorcerers.

754 695 How does society defend itself against the wisimã? There is first of all the test oath. At regular intervals, every two or three years for example, the grand man gathers together all the Bonis to the last man before Odun's chapel, and makes each one drink a little of a magic liquid while inviting him to utter the formula: Efu mi e meki wisi fu dede a sama, mi mu dede: If I do sorcery to make someone die, I must die. This is what is called diggi sweri, to drink the test. Actually, it is a harmless liquid, but each one is convinced that a wisimã would not be able to drink it without dying from it. If someone stubbornly refuses to present himself at the ceremony, he is not obliged to, but he has denounced himself: suspicions will be directed on him henceforward.

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754 789 Trial for sorcery does not exist among the Bozo, but a procedure exists which allows for pinning down suspicions.

After each death the dead person is asked the question: Is it wisi that killed thee? The question is put last (they first ask sunu, then fyo-fyo /see p. 398/).

If it is wisi, they ask: Is it such-and-such a family? (In general it is in the lineage itself), then the names of the lineage members are uttered successively until there is a positive response.

754 695 The one who is thus accused of wisi can be summoned to justify himself before the grand man, but that can only have the character of an investigation and not a trial. The suspected individual may not be challenged. They accept the fact that it is only a matter of presumption and that the dead accuser can lie, pursuing vengeance beyond the grave.

The Refugee Blacks declare that there is no certainty about wisi.

754 613 692 A remarkable principle of customary law is that if a member of a matrilineage /240/ is believed to have killed one of his "brothers," the judiciary power of the Bozo cannot interfere. It is an affair purely within the lineage.

754 Thus no one can be challenged or expelled for an act of sorcery. If one suspects somebody strongly, one will avoid him, one will turn the cold shoulder to him, all the time remaining polite, but one will not show anything. To this principle is attached a very noble idea, that of the interdiction of vengeance. He who is victim of sorcery must under no circumstances do countersorcery. He can only ask for the protection of the zbia. One must not under any circumstances ask a divinity or his ancestors to harm his aggressor.

754 715 787 Among the Refugee Blacks there is only one sanction against the wisima: They will necessarily be found out at their death. The yaska of the dead person, interrogated by the elders,

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will be obliged to confess: "It is I who killed So-and-So and So-and-So." They immediately inform the grand man, who orders the usual procedure against wisimã: Ceremonies are suspended, the body is transported by boat to a place reserved for cursed people, downstream from Boni country, and it is abandoned in the bush without being buried. Grand Man Difu is trying to modify this custom and to compel burial of wisimã in a special cemetery, but without great success up to now, it seems.

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There is no broko dε. The spouse may remarry immediately. Since the property of the deceased are presumed to be ill-gotten, inheritance is cancelled. The house is destroyed and thrown into the water, the boat abandoned to the current.[1] Personal belongings of the deceased are turned over to the grand man who distributes them to whom he wishes.

The near relatives of persons thus designated are overcome with shame but can say nothing. Not a bit of responsibility is imputed to them.

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How does society protect itself against the sorcery of the wisimã from beyond the grave? According to Grand Man Difu, this is a problem which does not come up. The wisimã has been killed by Odun as punishment for his crimes. Since every being draws its force from the divine, he has no more force, he is destroyed as a being, he is no longer anything but an empty shadow incapable of doing harm.

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In fact, among the Refugee Blacks these trials of dead people are very rare. Whereas about 15 persons die per year on the average in Boni country, including about ten adults, in the last 20 years (1) only about 20 persons were revealed to be wisimã.

1. Disregarding the period 1957-1959 when a definite fresh outbreak of the fear of wisimã was observed.

d:thurault--3"6 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 SRs Bush Negroes SRs Boni

/240 cont./

754 776 787 be wisimã. We were able to draw up the list of these from information from diverse sources which agreed very well.

In nearly every case persons were concerned who had already been accused, during their lifetime, of being wisimã; and on whom suspicions had been directed either by reason of their solitary life and irascible character or as a consequence of a series of coincidences.

754 828 In general, they tend to accuse of wisi any individual who systematically isolates himself, shows ill will in the observation of customary law, or shows himself particularly selfish, irascible, or jealous.

754 648 /241/ They tend also to suspect those who in their youth had abandoned the tribe for years to settle among the Creoles, and those who frequent the Creoles of the region, known as quimboiseurs, or who go too often to Saint Laurent or Paramaribo to consult lukumã (clairvoyants) (1).

1. Consulting a clairvoyant is not contrary to the laws of Odun. Infringement of these laws begins when one claims to act upon other people.

754 434 828 Also deemed suspect of wisi is anyone who gets rich too quickly or shows an immoderate love of money. A hard-working man who earns his living in broad daylight is never accused of wisi. But the one who engages in trade is suspect. It is thought, for example, that G.... who furnished a shop and earns much money, is a "pledged man." It is said also of F.... a fishing contractor particularly greedy for profit. But neither has been accused openly.

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AS2 B28 S54 777 AS2 AS7 S59 AS2 B28 AS2 AS6 B28 S76 jealousy. To speak of jealousy as a negative magic force is not to be false to the thought of the Refugee Blacks. They regard it as an attenuated form of will, capable of bringing misfortunes even if no sorcery has been formulated. Jealousy is very marked in their character, associated with an individual on verging on asocial tendencies. When somebody is accused of will, jealousy is the commonest explanation of the crimes attributed to him; it is thought for example that a man can be jealous of his brother's growing rich to the point of making him die; that a woman may be jealous of the beauty or health of her sister's children. Not laying themselves open to jealousy is the constant preoccupation of the Refugee Blacks; one observes it in daily behavior, for example in the greetings which they exchange on the river. They never say, "I am well," but: "I feel only fair." If they come back from hunting they say, "I found a little."

AS2 AS6 B28 [182] [463] Examples are not lacking of people who avoid building a fine house or buying an outboard motor in order not to give cause for jealousy. This preoccupation has profound repercussions on the material life and the economy of the Refugee Blacks; it explains in particular the absence of specialized professions and trade among them.

[183] [591] Many aspects of the customary law of the Refugee Blacks have no other function than to exorcise, if one may say so, tendencies toward jealousy and selfishness which, if they were given free rein, would poison the life of the collectivity.

76 181 AS5 B28 The rites of death and mourning, which we have shown to constitute the pivot of the social life of the Refugee Blacks, are entirely based on the idea of preserving the surviving spouse from the effect of the jealousy of the deceased.

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[126] /241 cont./ Several cases of wisi. We transcribe these affairs as they were related to us, placing ourselves in the perspective of the narrator, without making any judgment as to the nature of the facts and their probability.

N... affair. -- N...., of Kotika, was working gold with another Boni. After they had eaten /242/ together, the latter was taken with uncontrollable vomiting, then he died. His near relatives blamed N...., accusing him of wisi. In the night N... took refuge at Benzdorp and took passage on a Dyuka
[69] boat which was going down the river. He settled in Paramaribo. Since then his sister T... has gone to join him. They have left the Boni for good.

P... affair. -- Toko (Dipési II), while hoeing on the lower river, wagered one morning with his friend Kwami (who told us the story) to stay in a dive for the time necessary to fill a five-liter demijohn; bet taken; Toko did not come back up. He had drowned. His body was found the next day. The family
[598] blamed one P..... of Kotika village, whose wife J... had left him to marry Toko and who at the time had made threats.
[683] They insulted him, they presented Toko's decomposed body to him: "Eat him, since thou hast killed him like game." P... stubbornly denied it. The grand man commanded that he be left alone, turning him over to Odun to punish if he were guilty. As a matter of fact, some time afterward, P... died and was declared wisimi.

[464] S... affair. -- About 1955, S...., of Kotika, about 60 years old, was working with Kwau weeding the clearings of a Benzdorp Creole who raised oxen. One morning this cattle-raiser saw one of his oxen covered with blood coming from wounds which bore tooth marks and could not have been made by bats. He followed the traces of blood which led him to S...'s hammock.

/262 cont./

754 He accused him of being an azemã (vampire) and of drinking the ox's blood. S... answered nothing, which appeared to everyone obvious proof of his guilt. He untied his boat and went away. Since then everybody in Kotika avoids him; they abstain from accusing him personally in order not to become victims of his sorcery.

Agyémésu affair. -- Agyémésu, an old man of Assi village (Awara Bakka) who died in 1953, was a solitary and morose man with odd ways. For a long time he had been accused by S... (of Loka) and by N...., a Djuka living among the Bomi, of being a wisimã and of having made them sick. He had even [595] been accused before the grand man, had denied it, and the grand man according to usage had told him: "We leave to God [169] the job of punishing thee if thou art guilty." Agyémésu, in order to flee his persecutors, had settled in the Indian village of Asolaé.

His accusers insisted to people of his lineage that he be brought and publicly interrogated. A... and P... were sent, who went to get him by making him believe that the council of the Awara Bakka lo, putting an end to a long dispute, had decided to name him captain as the doyen of the lo. Without [595] mistrust, he followed them to Assi. He was received by his [154] accusers who insulted him tumultuously, without, however, there being any blows. The poor man remained speechless, which appeared to all to be the obvious proof of his guilt. He took to his bed and five days later he was dead (1).

1. The Refugee Blacks are so suggestible that the sole fact of seeing oneself cursed and abandoned by all must bring on a psychological shock capable [171] of bringing death. Similar cases have been observed in Africa.

/242 cont./

754 Of course he was recognized as a wisiman by the first
764 adjuration made to his body carried in the papay on the heads
787 of two men: "If thou art a wisi man, do not come toward us."
The dead man drew back.

[784] /243/Continuation of the interrogation showed that he had not yet killed anybody, but that he had been killed by Odun when he was preparing to kill someone of his lineage.

954 The persecutors of Agyémén, contrary to their hope, did not recover after his death from the maladies which they were attributing to his sorcery; that did not shake their conviction in
955 the least. They left for Paramaribo to have themselves treated
648 by a Creole magician (for the Surinam Creoles, who practice white magic and black magic indiscriminately, are by this fact reputed to be more expert than the Refugee Blacks in combating the effects of wisi).

954 In recounting this story to us, the grand man told us that it is always necessary to be cautious with accusations of wisi,
[962] because one can never be sure. A man unjustly accused can
[784] commit suicide and pursue his accusers with his kunu (most of the Boni state that they would do so in such a case). In former
173 times, the barbarous punishments in use in Africa were applied
683 to revealed wisiman: they were burned alive. But people tell
784 that one of them, some months afterward, undertook against his accusers' lineage a kunu which still lasts today. He had been
[198] wrongly condemned! It is through fear of the kunu more than through care for humanity, that these punishments have been abolished.

754 It certainly seems that the constant fear of the wisiman in
[152] which the Boni live is only a collective hallucination, and that rare indeed are those who dare to indulge in practices which might draw upon them such terrible social and religious sanctions. As for these practices themselves, they appear to be without any real content, and the misfortunes attributed to them are

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/263 cont./

754 [983] only commonplace illnesses or accidents of some sort. We have never heard *poisoning*, in the usual sense of the term, mentioned.

754 695 182 The *winimã* trials are in our opinion the most unpleasant aspect of the civilization of the Refugee Blacks. But it must be admitted that they correspond to profound necessities. These archaic societies need an obvious materialization of the principles they have given themselves. Since evil exists, opposing itself to good, the practices of *wisi* and *winimã* exist, and the punishment of evildoers is indispensable for the society to remain subject to the law of good.

[984] By its notion of the *kuusu* which turns aside toward the gods the responsibility for most misfortunes, by the extreme rarity of *winimã* trials, by the prudence of its judiciary action which in point of fact pursues only the dead, the society of the Refugee Blacks shows itself humane and realistic.

If one undertook with the Refugee Blacks definite action to make these practices disappear, one would risk obscuring their notion of good and evil and removing all efficacy from their customary law.

[183] The social order of the Refugee Blacks cannot be maintained if the interdiction of harming anyone and the interdiction of vengeance do not remain clearly laid down. It matters little that these acts of sorcery are without real content: It is the intention to harm which counts, with all its social and psychological consequences.

171 177 182 754 When one observes the Creole populations of the Guianas and the West Indies, even though /244/ they have been under the influence of Christianity for several centuries, one is struck by the development of sorcery and by its repercussions on the whole of social life. The teaching received at school and from the catechism, which embraces white magic and black magic in a single reprobation, has greatly contributed toward making these populations lose the principles of social morals of their ancestors without in exchange modifying their

/244 cont./

191 image of the world. Since magic practices are rejected by
179 religion, since it even denies their reality, one does not think,
182 when one finds oneself constrained to have recourse to them,
754 of transferring to them the notion of good and evil which it
teaches. Black magic gets in almost inevitably because a person believes he must defend himself; then its use becomes habitual, and the two forms of magic end up by mixing together and being no longer regarded as fundamentally different from each other.

191 754 695 Cases of wisi and Boni customary law. In African villages, cases of sorcery are interpreted by interminable and useless discussions, wild accusations, protestations of innocence, sometimes more or less sincere confessions, oaths and legal tests with always contested results. These cases are never finished; they are in permanent evolution, sometimes for months and years. Opinion moves successively onto different hypotheses according to events which take place, seeking its way groping like a man lost in darkness.

754 695 182 It is clear that the first lawgivers of the Refugee Blacks, by carrying judgment back to the death of those concerned and by refusing the wisimã any kind of pardon or compromise, tried to prevent the development of these sad crises. What is the use of discussing interminably, since there is no certain proof, and since nobody may confess? But customary law collides on this point with tendencies too deep to be entirely restrained. The laws of Oɔun are not always obeyed to the letter, and it happens sometimes that the Boni lose their footing in the observance of their customary law. Then crises take place among them, as violent and confused as in the villages of Black Africa, going as far as paralyzing social life for several weeks; then peace returns for several months, sometimes for several years.

Guthrie--383 K-b (1948-1958) 1961 580 Bush Negroes 569
Boni

/264 cont./

954 695 571 In 1956, a Boniville woman, N.... was convicted of having paid a Creole quimboiseur to make the grand man die. She confessed, a rare thing in this kind of case, and the materiality of the facts did not appear doubtful. The Boni were strongly impressed by this unprecedented event, and for several weeks the members of the lineage concerned were in such agitation that one could have believed they had lost their reason. In Boniville they "held court" continually for nearly two months; and they discussed so much that farm work was neglected and part of the rice crop lost.

954 695 683 [648] What were they going to do with this woman? The laws of Odun forbade killing her, no more could she be expelled. The Boni made discreet overtures to the administration to find out whether it was not possible to have her imprisoned. They were surprised to learn that French law does not recognize the offense of sorcery. Somebody then proposed having her admitted as a servant at the leprosarium of the Acarouani on the /244/ coast. This suggestion produced a surprising result; the Boni were unanimous in thinking that making someone who was not a leper live in a leprosarium was a punishment worse than death, and they resolved to pardon her.

How does one go about it, since the laws of Odun do not permit pardoning a wisimi? Nobody could give us a satisfactory justification on this, but in 1959 A...., the preceding year spurned and maltreated, had taken up normal living again in her village.

954 961 784 In fact, a case of wisi is terminated only upon the death of the person concerned. If a man who has been accused of wisi during his lifetime dies accidentally, or is struck by a fulminating sickness, the fact that he has been chastised by Odun appears as incontestable proof. The case is fixed in the memory of the group in a specific form and will be given as an example to inspire respect for customary law.

Guthrie--384 K-5 (1948-1958) 1961 580 Bush Negroes 580 Boni

/365 cont. /

Burial of a witch. We transcribe here an account given by a witness of this scene, K...., of Papaïmon village, withholding the exact date and place.

"It was at the time of the clearings, people were in the farming habitations and the village was almost deserted. I was going fishing with P.... of Loka. We had moored our boat and were walking at the edge of the water when our attention was attracted by a nauseous odor which came from an unoccupied house. There we found the cadaver of a woman, K...., dead for two or three days. She had tried to break into the house by raising the roof, but she had remained wedged between two beams and smothered to death. Since she knew the house to be empty, she could not have had any other intention than to lodge an evil spell; after disengaging the body in the presence of witnesses, we went to inform the grand man who commanded, the motive seeming to be clear, that the yaka be interrogated on the spot without making a coffin.

"Before a council composed of half a dozen men and two village heads, the interrogation began; the dead woman was carried in an old boat bottom; at times I myself served as bearer. Pressed with questions, she confessed that she had wisi (1) and that she had been killed by Odun. The case was

1. They say commonly "to have wisi," as they say "to have an obia," "to have a remedy."

clear. We were ordered to transport the body to the place reserved for cursed people, downstream from Boni country. When we arrived there the body was again borne on the heads of two men to ask it to choose the spot where it wanted to be abandoned. The dead woman drew us far into the forest, wandered a moment, then stopped. We abandoned her on the

754 766 /245 cont./ ground, after scattering the cloths which were covering her, and left without carrying out any rite.

"Next we went to Boniville, the grand man invoked Odun on our behalf, stating that we had only followed his laws and that he had to protect the performers of the job against any distressing consequence."

754 181 178 Development of sorcery. Since 1957 Boni country has been passing through a crisis; /246/ fear of sorcery is poisoning village life, while in 1948-50 it was a preoccupation of secondary importance.

[598] That is due to the fact that the rapid growing rich of part of the Boni aggravates jealousies and suspicions. Moreover, these affairs tend to appear in series. Since the case related above (1958), in which a woman, N...., was convicted of having paid a Creole quimboiseur to make the grand man die, an affair which strongly impressed the Boni, they tend to see wisi in all misfortunes that occur.

[169] In November, 1958 the death of a little girl of 12 of Kotika village was attributed to her uncle Mbomaolo, who had recently emigrated to Surinam and settled in a Creole village. [787] It is believed that he "committed himself," that is, that he sold his soul to the devil (1), which necessitates sacrificing one

1. This notion, which plays such a large role in West Indian beliefs, has no equivalent among the Refugee Blacks. There is no word in the Boni language for translating the term "committed." They translate thus: a e suku didibi, he seeks the devil. The Boni do not have a clear image of the devil, and this notion remains, in fact, foreign to their beliefs.

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754 181 178 [782]

/246 cont./ of his near relatives, his sister's children being regarded as the victims most pleasing to the demon.

Although in former times one to two out of ten deaths were attributed to wisi, in 1957 and 1958 out of 14 adult deaths of which we could obtain the explanation, there were:

[784] --Four wisimã killed by Odun, including two women of over 85 who during their lifetime had never been the object of unfavorable notice;

[24] --One death by the action of a wisimã,

or a total of more than a third of the deaths; out of the nine others, two were looked upon as natural deaths (dead of old age), seven were attributed to the kunu.

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The Refugee Blacks and Creole magic. Some of them go to get from the lukumã what their own social morals forbid: vengeance or success acquired at the expense of other people. They have uttered an oath that prohibits the practice of wisi: for most of them it is clear that if they paid a playeur /magician, sorcerer/ to harm someone, it would be the same as if they performed the sorcery themselves. But others make a mental reservation on this point.

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In 1951, G..., of the Kotika lo, then about 20 years old, felt ill while staying at Saint Laurent. He went to find a Creole maïtif (clairvoyant) who presented him with a mirror, announcing to him that he was going to see in it the face of the one who had playé /bewitched, cast a spell on/ him. G... saw nothing in the mirror. The maïtif was not upset at this and revealed to him that the playeur must be someone in his wife's family. G... then recalled a dispute he had had some time previously with one of his wife's brothers and let himself be convinced: since that day he has not gotten along with his brother-in-law.

754 /246 cont./
755 The maltif asked 2,000 francs from him as the price of
648 his consultation.

789 Curse. Someone who judges himself victim of evil-doing has at his disposal a supreme resource: /247/ cursing his adversary, that is, appealing directly to the supreme God, Masa Gadu, to ask him to punish his adversary. This is called seni gadu -- sending God -- against someone. To do that, while asking God to kill him or make him sick, one kneels and strikes the ground with both hands in the presence of the adversary or in front of his house. This act is regarded as totally different from wisi, for one is relying on the justice of God, who judges with equity and punishes only the guilty.

However that may be, cursing is for the Refugee Blacks a very serious act. It may happen that, feeling guilty, the source of the injustice asks pardon and promises to make amends for his misdeeds. The one who uttered the curse again implores Masa Gadu in order to take back the words he spoke: "He has given me satisfaction, do nothing against him." But oftener still it happens that a complicated affair is involved, that both parties concerned are persuaded of their legitimate
[692] ground and curse each other. The case must then be carried before the grand man and straightened out at once or misfortunes
[695] may pounce upon both lineages. The grand man judges without appeal and inflicts a punishment on the one who was wrong
[778] on the main issue of the debate. Then he obliges the ad-
[782] versaries to be reconciled before the fraga tiki, where the offering of tafia and water is made.

[828] The effect of these conceptions is to render nearly im-
[754] possible hidden hatreds and rancors, which the Refugee Blacks fear very much, for they are the source of wisi.

688 In general, the act of getting angry in public and serious-
689 ly insulting somebody is considered as an offense against moral and religious law, capable of attracting misfortunes; it is an

688 /247 cont./
689 attenuated form of wisi; in serious cases the grand man may inflict a severe punishment on the guilty ones.

789 ɔbia. The Refugee Blacks use the word ɔbia (1) to designate

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1. The term ɔbia is used by the Refugee Blacks when they are speaking to outsiders, to designate positive magic, but in reality this term has a very different meaning in their language. It designates any kind of magic action, negative as well as positive; likewise the term ɔbiamɛ̃ has the sense of sorcerer as well as that of holder of a remedy.

192 The Boni among themselves use the word deesi, remedy, instead of ɔbia. They do not use the word deesimɛ̃ in place of ɔbiamɛ̃. It is said, for example, of a man who knows the rites of a cult of possession "A sabi Papa gadu sani" (he knows the things of Papa gadu).

[787] The term gadumɛ̃ designates one who is possessed of a god, and not one who knows how to bring on possession.

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114 In the rest of this work we shall continue, nevertheless, to use the terms ɔbia and ɔbiamɛ̃ to designate positive magic, in order to facilitate collation with the English- and Dutch-language authors who have used it in this sense.

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755 823 [174] White clay, pɛmba (the word and the rite are of Congolese origin), does not undergo any special preparation. In the thought of the Refugee Blacks it has the power to fix upon a man's body the magic influence of the infusion of leaves.

791 Among the Boni, except for the cult of Odun, there are no priests, strictly speaking, invested with a function at the same time social and religious. A large number of persons 756 791 are regarded as "knowing remedies." This notion implies at once knowledge and power. In general the ɔbiamɛ̃ is believed to hold only a specialized power: for example, he knows how to prepare a hunting ɔbia, or an ɔbia for protection against wisimɛ̃. This power he received fom his father (as an exception, it seems, from his uncle) who instructed him, before dying, in the specialized rites it requires and transmitted his power to him by giving him mula.

To give mula to someone, one blows into his hands, one puts them on his head while utering a formula by which one transmits to him a certain power or piece of magic knowledge.

What is the criterion of legitimacy? Who has the right to call himself an ɔbiamɛ̃? It seens that basically everything is reduced to this: the ɔbiamɛ̃ hasthe conviction, the sensation that he holds this power; as for his clients, they believe they observe the efficacy of his ɔbia; ifthey stop having confidence in his remedy, they will abstain from coming to ask it of him, that is all; no social prohibition comes to limit the action of the ɔbiamɛ̃. The grand man intevenes only against someone [754] who might claim to hold remedies to harm another person or to capture his will, which would be wisi.

[888] /249/ The Boni accept the possibility of deception as regards ɔbia, especially by people who are too young, but they have the conviction that the elders (people over 55-60) possess wisdom and that one can apply to them with complete confidence.

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751 Next in the preoccupations of the Refugee Blacks come the ɔbia called tapu, that is to say, protection. There exist numerous kinds adapted to the various dangers of a supernatural order (protection against other divinities, against the maleficent entities of the bush, against the wisimɛ̃).

[796] [754] The Ampuku are generally asked for tapu against the wisimɛ̃. We saw a remarkable one in front of the house of F... (Dju). Its owner was not a little proud of it and he talked about it to us freely.

751 798 [532] The ɔbia, placed at ground level in front of the door, was composed of a crude representation in clay of a head in which appeared two wide-open eyes: in front of it were planted in the ground three plant clusters including a planting of ground-nuts and one of maize; the whole was topped by a small basket containing an egg. It was necessary to water the ɔbia with a certain infusion of leaves at regular intervals to restore its force.

751 754 This ɔbia insured infallible protection against wisimɛ̃; in fact, none of them would have been able to cross the threshold without stubbing his toe on the door frame in spite of all his precautions; F... stated that his ɔbia constituted by this fact an effective means of detection of wisimɛ̃, for it was enough for him to invite suspects to enter his hut, to know what to think: the wisimɛ̃ refused, for fear of thus being given away in the eyes of all; one could thus at least pin down suspicions.

751 [411] Other ɔbia are called sama mɔfu tɛtɛy (ɔbia against "people's mouths," that is, people's jealousy). They are nearly always seen on fine guns; they have a cord to hold them made of mɔriti palm fibers, to which two cowries are fastened.

755 The ɔbia intended to treat diseases generally have for support a calabash containing the infusion of leaves and a ball of pɛmba (kaolin). The person concerned sprinkles himself several times a day with this liquid.

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789 The one who installs a kɛ̃ndu utters the formula: mi poti yu ya, ɛfu a sama kɔm fu fufu mi sani, yu mu siki ɛn (I put thee here; if someone comes to steal my belongings, thou must make him sick).

[784] If someone goes beyond /it/ and commits a theft, he will be struck sooner or later with various sicknesses.

According to the conceptions of the Refugee Blacks, the kɛ̃ndu is blind and strikes as well the friend who came to take objects because he received previous authorization to do it. So, many forego placing kɛ̃ndu, as with us, people hesitate to set wolf-traps for fear of causing accidents.

789 However, the kɛ̃ndu does not act upon the people who
784 have the same basic interdiction (bwasi kina) as the one who
428 placed it. This conception shows that these interdictions transmitted from father to children really are the mark of true patrilineages.

694 In fact, we have ascertained several times, there are
789 burglaries in Boni country in spite of the kɛ̃ndu and people do
754 not succeed in uncovering the burglars; it is infinitely probable that one must not see in this the stamp of freethinkers who do not believe in sorcery; these are people who have obtained from a wisimɛ̃ a talisman of black magic stronger than the kɛ̃ndu! At least this is the explanation their victims give.

789 One can lift a kɛ̃ndu on behalf of any man, whom one
751 wants, for example, to send to get an object which one has forgotten; for that it is sufficient to give him mula: one blows into one's hands and lays them on the man's head, saying: mi puu a kɛ̃ndu gi yu, a ˈɛ̃ mu du a sani ɛ̃ŋga yu: I withdraw the kɛ̃ndu for thee, it must not do anything to thee. /253/

Mula can be given retroactively: If someone perceives that he has inadvertently incurred the chastisement of a kɛ̃ndu, he has several days to be able to ask for mula from the owner, for the action of the kɛ̃ndu is slow.

/254 cont./

784 If someone realizes that he has broken his kina, he goes
756 to see, not an ɔbiaman, but the specialist-healer of leprosy
751 and asks him to treat him by way of prevention.

411 Beliefs about guns and hunting. The gun, which entered the
832 everyday life of the Refugee Blacks two centuries ago, has taken
[177] an important place in their magic. It is the symbol of virility.
[558] A Refugee Black who no longer has a gun is a man humiliated and almost dishonored. As one of them explained to us in begging us to help him replace his old gun eaten by rust: "If you cannot present yourself before the women with a machete, hunting bag on your shoulder, and gun in your hand, you are not a man."

411 This idea has been transposed onto the plane of magic
754 and they take for granted that the wisimã can, by putting evil spells on a gun, attack the owner of the weapon in his virility. It is supposed to be enough for someone to put his finger into the barrel of the gun while uttering a formula of vengeance, or even being moved by hate for the owner of the weapon, for this gun to be no longer capable of hitting the mark. So, to avoid these misfortunes, the Boni never part with their guns and never lend them to anyone. If, in spite of these precautions, they
411 789 have the impression that a gun no longer fires so well, they will go to an ɔbiaman to have it washed of maleficent influence. There exist for that purpose several remedies all of which consist of soaking the gun for one to three days in infusions of leaves, which has the unfailing result of making it rust. We have seen a hammerless, latest model gun spoiled thus by an intelligent Boni head boatman, a clever mechanic and usually full of good sense.

224 We have never witnessed among the Boni any individual or collective hunting rites claiming to attract game or to promote meeting it (when, on the contrary, hunting piayes are extremely widespread among the Creoles).

/291 cont./

157 464 463 Wishing to take advantage of all the possibilities which turn up, the Refugee Blacks are led to learn simultaneously the traditional techniques of their group, boating, boat-building, felling of trees, squaring of wood, and /building/ framework. In these techniques they may be considered specialized workers.

157 812 Proud of their strength and knowledge, sure of themselves, the Refugee Blacks are never worried about the future and consider life as an exciting adventure, ceaselessly bringing new things. If the past year has been bad, the new year will be better, with God's help. Nobody doubts that he will find gainful work again.

152 182 Influence of jealousy: absence of specialized professions and trade. Another strong psychological tendency having a direct influence on the economy is jealousy.

152 828 556 753 799 The effect of jealousy, and the fear of jealousy, is to limit enrichment and to maintain a de facto equality: it often happens that talented people forego undertaking profitable work in order not to give occasion for the jealousy which would render their position in the village difficult and might draw misfortunes upon them; for people have the idea that jealousy draws down illnesses and calamities upon him who is the object of it and on his near relatives, by the action of a natural force, even without sorcery being formulated.

754 556 441 829 Fear of sorcery interferes in the same way; one who becomes unusually rich is almost inevitably accused of being a sorcerer and may be obliged to leave the country. Particularly vulnerable are those, very rare, who engage in trade. People do not suspect of sorcery a man who is seen to become rich by /292/ working ceaselessly. But the trader whose wealth increases without his furnishing obvious work, is quickly regarded as a "committed one," accused of having his good luck as a result of a pact with the devil.

/292 cont./

In that can doubtless be seen the most likely explanation of the absence, in the tribes of Refugee Blacks, of any internal trade. There are not even markets in the villages. In practice only Creole and Asian traders are patronized.

The repugnance which the Refugee Blacks have for trading with one another contributes toward preventing the development of specialized professions among them. Specialization does actually exist: one man is particularly good at buiding boats, another is a competent carpenter, still another devotes himself mainly to fishing; but the Refugee Blacks exercie these specialties with respect to other peoples and not with respect to one another. Nobody fails to build his own boat, his house, to cut his clearings himself. If it were otherwise, classe and castes would rapidly be created, and that is precisely what the moral law of the Refugee Blacks condemns. A special effect of this conception is to preserve family custom from detriorating, by preventing the rich from becoming great polygamistsmaintaining idle mistresses. We have never heard it said that a richer man paid someone to perform for him the customary work he owes to his wives, clearings, house, boat. Whateverhis wealth may be, he continues to do these jobs by the sweat of his brow, and that contributes toward maintaining in its meaning and value the tacit contract concluded between husband and wife.

Thus the geographic conditions, associated with influences of a social and psychological order, impose on the Refugee Blacks a unique economy, based on a symbiosiswith the coast populations in the form of piece-work or temporary wage-earning.